

BLUES AWAY TO ILFORD

HAVING reached the first round proper of the F.A. Cup, Wycombe Wanderers were brought down to earth on Monday when the draw for the F.A. Challenge Trophy was announced. The Blues have one of the most difficult matches — an away tie at Ilford.

This is the first time Wycombe have entered the Trophy, the competition which takes the place of the Amateur Cup for senior clubs. Wanderers could hardly have a tougher baptism on November 30.

Ilford, who reached the last ever Amateur Cup final before losing 4-1 to Bishop's Stortford last season, are currently second in the Rothmans Isthmian League Division One table, one place above Wycombe. Their record, which includes five defeats, is the club's best for many years and they top the goalscoring charts at the moment with 46 in 19 games.

They will undoubtedly test Wycombe to the limit but Wanderers can take heart in the fact that Slough inflicted a rare home defeat at Ilford on Saturday — winning 2-1.

Wanderers will have a good chance to see just how difficult their task will be on Saturday, as Ilford visit Loakes Park for a league game. A good result then should stand them in good stead for the cup tie.

Looking at the other draws, Slough will renew old rivalries when they visit Dagenham at Victoria Road. These two teams came up to Division One last season and so far this term Dagenham have lost only once.

Margate, beaten 2-1 by Wanderers in the last round of the F.A. Cup, take on Dulwich Hamlet at home and it will be interesting to see how the South London side fare against Southern League opposition. Hitchin, who have already beaten Barnet in the F.A. Cup after a replay, meet them again, this time at home while some all-Isthmian matches include Tooting v Walton, Sutton v Woking and Aveley v Bishop's Stortford.